



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 1 February 1967



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DAILY BRIEF
1 FEBRUARY 1967

1. North Vietnam

Hanoi is making a concerted effort to underscore the importance of its recent statements on how it might react to an unconditional end to the bombing. All chiefs of mission in Hanoi were called in, for instance, to hear a reading of the full text of one of these statements.

These latest statements contain no firm promises. In tone, however, they suggest that Hanoi would react positively to a cessation of the bombing.

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3. Congo

Tshombé is talking again about stepping up his activity against the Congolese Government.

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As for Mobutu, his problems with the Belgians are in no way improving. For one thing, Union Minière is moving out its people as fast as it can. The company is behaving as though it firmly intends to leave. On top of this, the idea is quickly evaporating that an international consortium could be formed to move in and take over.

4. Soviet Union

The only matter of substance raised between Russian President Podgorny and Pope Paul on Monday concerned religious liberty in the Soviet bloc. Podgorny brushed aside discussion of Vietnam, and the Pope was unresponsive to Podgorny's efforts to turn the conversation to the dangers of German re-vanchism.

The Russian's talk with President Saragat was just about as bland.

5. Communist China

The status of the political struggle in the provinces remains confused. In a broadcast yesterday, Peking claimed that pro-Mao revolutionaries had taken over another province, but this could be merely talk. Today a broadcast from Shanghai--supposed to be firmly controlled by pro-Mao forces--admitted that the "enemy" is fighting in a "well planned and well organized manner," and "persecuting" pro-Mao revolutionaries.

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6. West Germany

Chancellor Kiesinger has told the Bonn embassy that he hopes his intentions will not be misunderstood in this country. He said he is firmly committed to NATO and that his policy toward Eastern Europe will be conducted with regard for US interests. He added that we should not be upset if his government relies mainly on the French to support that policy.

7. Spain

The current strikes and student demonstrations--both accompanied by violence--have for the first time produced some collaboration between workers and students. These disorders, however, will undoubtedly strengthen the hand of the hard-line conservatives who have been protesting a proposed liberalization of labor laws.

8. Panama

President Robles is now somewhat pessimistic about getting a new canal treaty wrapped up this year. He suspects the US is not moving on this as fast as it could.

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9. Chile

President Frei has cooled down considerably now that the initial shock of last month's congressional rebuff has passed. In an interview yesterday with Ambassador Dungan, the President no longer talked of "crushing the opposition"; instead, he admitted there were real dangers in pressing for early elections.

In a similar switch, Frei now says he is anxious to go to the inter-American summit, and expects no difficulty in getting permission to attend.

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